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AUTHOR Johnson, Michael P.; Shuman, Susan
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ABSTRACT

Sexual harassment of Penn State students by school employees was studied in 1982. The research focused on harassment by employees who had power over the student or who were in a position to affect the student's educational experience. A random sample of 515 full-time female students was asked whether university employees had ever: stared at or commented on her body in a suggestive way, or directed remarks or jokes toward her; made unwelcome requests for dates with her; requested or demanded her participation in sexual activity; or made physically aggressive sexual advances toward her or touched her in an objectionable way. About one out of four (24 percent) of respondents had been harassed in at least one of the ways described. It was estimated that of the 11,800 full-time women students enrolled at the campus, about 2,800 had experienced some sexual harassment. Nine percent of the respondents had experienced either physical harassment or requests/demands for sex. Eight percent had experienced unwelcome requests for dates. Information is provided on the characteristics of victims, the power relationship, consequences for the victim, and reporting of incidents. Ways that the university can reduce sexual harassment are also discussed. Excerpts of comments by respondents are included. (SW)

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Sexual Harassment of Students

at

The Pennsylvania State University

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Michael P. Johnson

Susan Shuman

Department of Sociology

September, 1983

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Table of Contents

Sexual Harassment at Penn State

What is Sexual Harassment? 2

The Study 3

The Major Types of Sexual Harassment 4

- Suggestive Behavior 4
- Unwelcome Requests for Dates 6
- Requests or Demands for Sex 7
- Physical Harassment 7
- Summary 11

The Characteristics of Sexual Harassment Incidents

- The Power Relationship 12
- Characteristics of Victims 13
- Consequences for the Victims 14
- Reporting the Incidents 15

Recommendations for the Reduction of Sexual Harassment

Prevention 16

- Definition 16
- Publicity 17

Official Reaction to Harassment Incidents 18

- Statement of Procedures 18
- Handling of Specific Cases 20

Summary of Recommendations

Appendices

A: Table of Harassment Frequencies 23

B: Tables of Characteristics of Sexual Harassment 24-28

C: References 29

Sexual Harassment of Students

at

The Pennsylvania State University

Although educators have long been aware that students are sometimes sexually harassed at school, we still have very little information on the extent of such harassment and its impact on the educational environment. More specifically, while we know that sexual harassment takes place at Penn State, we do not know much about the general nature of the incidents, their frequency, or their effect on the students involved.

The first major section of this report presents data which leave no doubt that sexual harassment is a serious problem at Penn State, as it is at other universities (Benson and Thomson, 1982; Lott, Reilly, and Howard, 1982; Wilson and Kraus, 1983; Perry, 1983). Women students at Penn State frequently find that they must interact with educators who show sexual interest in them which is inappropriate and which undermines the educational process.

The second major section of the report draws upon the data and on the experiences of people at other universities to suggest a number of ways in which the University could improve its sexual harassment policy to reduce the incidence of harassment and to deal with it more effectively when it happens.

What is Sexual Harassment?

In its broadest sense, the phrase "sexual harassment" refers to any objectionable emphasis on the sexuality of one person by another. However, a more restrictive use of the term has recently taken precedence over the general meaning, and "sexual harassment" has come to be associated with incidents in which organizationally based power is the critical element. As Benson and Thomson (1982) have put it, the problem is one of the "confluence of authority relations and sexual interest." This report is concerned with the sexual harassment of students by employees of the University, and will focus on incidents which meet three criteria.

1. The incident involves conduct of a sexual nature, verbal or physical.
2. The conduct is objectionable to its recipient.
3. The initiator is a University employee in a position to affect the victim's educational experience, academic record, and/or employment or other opportunities based on educational experience or record.

Two aspects of these criteria need to be highlighted. First, the focus is on employees with power over the student. Incidents of harassment from Penn State employees who had no power over the student in question, though encountered in our research, are not included in our statistics. The data presented below deal only with harassment from people who were in a position to affect the student's educational experience.

Second, the criteria make no reference to the initiator's intent to misuse organizationally based power. The recipient of unwelcome sexual conduct from a person in a position of authority has no direct access to the intentions of the harasser and cannot assume that a rebuff will not be met by retaliation. As in all power relations the possibility of retaliatory action suffices to create a coercive situation for the subordinate. Therefore, the professed or inferred intentions of the initiators cannot be the basis for defining sexual harassment.

The Study

During the Spring Term, 1982, interviews were conducted with 515 full time female students at University Park representing 87% of a target sample composed of two groups: a strict random sample of 295 graduate women and a strict random sample of 295 undergraduate women. The face-to-face interviews lasted from 15 to 90 minutes and were conducted by trained interviewers.

The careful random selection process, combined with the high completion rate, minimizes the possibility sampling bias. Systematic bias from reporting errors due to forgetting and/or embarrassment might make the estimates of the extent of harassment a bit low, but we believe that the care taken in interview construction and administration has minimized such problems. The depth interviews elicited detailed answers to a number of questions about the circumstances in which harassment has occurred and about the responses of its victims and of the University.

The results of the investigation will be presented in two parts. First, a series of brief excerpts from the interviews will provide a sense, in the recipients' own words, of the nature of sexual harassment, and some general figures on frequency will be given. Second, data will be presented on characteristics of the incidents, their initiators and their recipients.

The Major Types of Sexual Harassment

The general definition of harassment (p. 1) includes incidents which may vary dramatically in their particulars. Therefore, in order to avoid ambiguity and to take definitional issues out of the hands of the respondents, questions were organized around four specific types of incidents. (The complete interview schedule is available from the author). Each woman was asked whether anyone employed by Penn State had ever ...

1. stared at or commented on her body in a suggestive way; or directed suggestive remarks or jokes towards her;
2. made unwelcome requests for dates with her;
3. requested or demanded her participation in sexual activity;
4. made physically aggressive sexual advances towards her or touched her on an objectionable way.

Suggestive behavior: Remarks, staring at or commenting on one's body. Approximately one out of every five women whom we interviewed had experienced suggestive remarks, staring, or comments on her body from someone in a position of power. Although such incidents do not

necessarily require the recipient to respond explicitly to the harassment, the power context is still often salient and the incidents invariably create a problematic atmosphere. The women who find themselves to be targets of such behavior report feeling uncomfortable, angry or embarassed, feelings that may affect decisions such as how often to go to class, where to sit, whether or not to seek help from a particular professor, what courses to take in the future, and so on. A few brief examples are presented below to provide a sense of the tone of such incidents. The first three are from graduate students, the last two undergraduates.

> 113. He knew I was breaking up with my boyfriend. I was losing weight. He would make comments about my body and chest. We were at a party and I had the same T-shirt on as he did and he made a remark about the difference. I just walked away. I would say I didn't like hearing it or I'd just ignore him.... It was during the time he didn't know whether he could renew my assistantship. I thought I shouldn't have had to put up with it.

> 246. It was more like comments like you'll go far because you're very atttractive, you're comfortable with yourself. A lot of emphasis on the attractive. Not commenting on the subject matter.... A lot of scanning of my body. I prefer someone looks me in the eye (rather) than at my chest.

> 177. I would be the object of several sexual comments made in class. This continued throughout the term. At first I was confused, and then I realized I continued to be the object. I even moved my seat because at first I was in a focal point, but it continued no matter where I sat.

> 019. I used to sit in the front in this class and I'd notice while he was lecturing he'd look over a lot and walk over to my side of the room. Oftentimes he seemed to be staring at me. My friends would also comment on this. They said it was leering. It made me very uncomfortable and concentration very difficult. I avoided going to his office for help because I was afraid to go.

> 294. I guess it started with his whistling at me in the hall. He was my teacher and he'd stare at me frequently in class and around campus. He'd make comments like "Nice chest" or "You look really good in those jeans," comments like that, definitely suggestive.

> Anything to get me irritated. He does this to other girls in the major, you just ignore it. It happens all the time, and you just have to ignore it and not let it bother you.

Unwelcome requests for dates. One out of every twelve female students has to deal with unwelcome requests for dates from someone in a position of power over her in the University. The dating of subordinates is a practice regarding which there seems to be considerable ambivalence in the academic community. The issue was put in this way by the official who handles harassment incidents at one major university: "We don't want to interfere with true love." The subtle problem, however, is that true love should be interfered with if it is unreciprocated and foisted upon a subordinate. Therefore, while one might take the positon that a welcome request for a date does not constitute harassment, a concern with the imposition of relationships on subordinates does lead to the conclusion that it is always inappropriate for a person in a position of power to ask out a subordinate, because such a request is potentially harassing.

One other issue which is sometimes raised with regard to requests for dates is their sexual nature. While it could be argued that many dating relationships are non-sexual, the dating situation is likely to lead to sex. Furthermore, the line between requests for dates and requests for sex is often very thin. The first example illustrates this basic ambiguity.

> 064. (He) asked me out and I refused. Always being around and jokes directed towards my body. He kept telling me about spare mattresses he had bought to soundproof his apartment, but hinted they could be used for other purposes, so I knew what he was hinting at. He's one of the people who are to read my thesis

> before it's accepted. I wanted to be friendly and not alienate him ...

The second example was chosen for its illustration of some of the more subtle effects of such advances on the quality of a student's education, effects of which the harasser may be entirely unaware.

> 409. He was a prof from (another department) working on a grant with other profs from my department. Therefore I would run into him periodically and he would ask me out for lunch, dinner, drinks and I said, "No." He kept asking. At the time this was happening I was interested in being on this project (grant) and his doing this contributed to my not wanting to do it anymore.

Requests or demands for sex. The third major type of sexual harassment involves a request or demand for sexual involvement. One out of every fifty women interviewed had experienced this type of harassment. The following example, an undergraduate dealing with a professor, provides a striking illustration of the potential for a request to be transformed into a demand when there is a confluence of sexual interest and organizationally derived power.

> 364. It was a small class and I was a leading student. I had gone to his office several times for help with homework assignments (this was my 2nd term at the University, having just come back to school after my divorce). He was friendly, took me to the coffee shop and bought me some coffee. This friendliness became something like ownership in his eyes. He began calling me, waylaying me before and after class and generally made a pest of himself. He began asking me to go away with him on weekends. I went to my mother for advice and we decided that the best thing to do was to end it cold. When I did, he threatened to withhold my grades. I told him I would go to the Dean if he did. It must have frightened him, because he stopped. The total length of time was eight weeks, and I never had him again.

Physical harassment: Physically aggressive sexual advances and objectionable touching. Approximately one out of every twelve women whom we interviewed had experienced some form of physical harassment.

The women's descriptions of the incidents suggest that it would be useful to distinguish among five different types of physical harassment.

First, there are occasional incidents of sexual assault. Although only one of our respondents reported such harassment, indicating that it is quite rare, we do have information from an informal call for information conducted in 1981 regarding a number of other such incidents at Penn State, and materials of the National Advisory Committee on Women's Educational Programs include a number of sexual crimes (Till, 1980: 22-24).

Second, some incidents of physical harassment have a clear and undisguised intent on the part of the harasser to have both momentary sexual contact and to attempt to encourage the victim to participate in a more lasting sexual encounter. The following example comes from a graduate student who was harassed by a faculty member who was her advisor and a member of her doctoral committee, as well as her teacher.

> 406. After a faculty picnic I was given a ride back to my apartment and he gave me a ride home. He stopped the car and got out and asked me to get out. So I got out and he put his arms around me and I tried to remove them, then he attempted to kiss me and I told him we had better leave. We got back into the car and he took me home and he asked me if he could come up to my apartment and I said, "No". He told me that he had influence over my job and my career and that I should think about it. He mentioned reciprocity and said that if I scratched his back, he'd scratch mine. I got out of the car speechless. He acted casual about the rejection and he kept telling me to relax and asked why I was so nervous.

In this case the intent to misuse power is clear. The following incident of a graduate student and her advisor, on the other hand, is a case in which the harasser's intent to abuse his authority is more ambiguous.

> 413. We've worked together for two years. One night we were working late and he drove me home. He tried to kiss me goodnight. He started kissing me a lot and tried to go further. I started crying. He stopped and we talked about it later several times and he was very apologetic.

One might ask whether this second account is simply an example of a man making advances and being rejected, an incident unrelated to sexual harassment. When this student was asked later in the interview, "did you feel that you might be punished in some way if you didn't go along with him?" she replied, "I wondered whether it would hurt our working relationship."

The third type of physical harassment involves physical contact which, though unabashedly sexual, does not seem to be an attempt to elicit further participation from the victim. The first example comes from a freshman who was harassed by a graduate student teaching assistant.

> 353. He was my lab instructor. It started with some smart comments in the lab. Then there were typical pinches. He got worse as the term went on. He kept getting dirtier in his comments and he would always rub up aginst me. He would never leave me alone.

The second example involves a graduate student being harassed by the man for whom she worked as a graduate assistant.

> 266. Students and faculty from my department were at happy hours at a local bar. We had been drinking and standing together socializing. We were standing in the center of the room, facing each other, when he reached out and made physical contact with my breast. He maintained subtle contact for over 30 seconds. I was shocked and somewhat confused, wondering if this contact was deliberate. I soon realized it was deliberate, but tried not to react in an attempt to stay calm, and define the situation.

The fourth type of physical harassment is thinly disguised momentary sexual contact. In these cases it seems that the harasser does not wish to be <u>openly</u> sexual, but his actions belie his attitude.

The following example is taken from the story of a graduate student encountering a professor from her department.

> 442. I was walking from the TA cubicles to the department mailboxes which were in the main office. The professor was there and went out of his way to bump into me full frontal. He hit my breasts with his chest and in the guise of steadying himself, grabbed both my breasts. I do not believe it's accidental on his part. I had seen him do it to other female grad students and I had heard from two other female grad students that he had done it to them. First I pushed him away. Then I gave him a murderous kick in the leg on his bone.

The fifth type of physical harassment is touching which may not be considered by the harasser to be sexual, but which is the kind of contact which would only be directed toward females and which is reacted to as at least potentially sexual by the recipient. The first incident involves a senior and her advisor; the second is a graduate student and her advisor who is also the director of her graduate program.

> 073. ...he's a very nice man but a little bit too friendly. He knows my home town and visits occasionally. When he first found this out he thought it was neat. Every time I leave he hugs me and gives me a kiss and I don't like it.

> 499. ...I would come in and talk to him about work I was doing in independent study and he would come over and sit next to me, talk to me, put his arm around me, rub my back. The big one was that he would pull his chair next to me and rub my leg or knee and say that he was just trying to make me feel more comfortable with him - "As a first year graduate student you're obviously ill at ease with faculty members." He did this repeatedly.

Clearly, the variability among these five types of physical harassment is great. What all of the incidents have in common though, is objectionable touching which must be reacted to in the context of a power relation in which the recipient is a subordinate.

Summary. Almost one out of four (24%) of the women interviewed had been harassed in at least one of the ways described above during their time at Penn State. Figures from other studies would suggest that Penn State students experience no more harassment than students at other universities (Benson and Thomson, 1982; Lott, Reilly, and Howard, 1982; Perry, 1983). However, a conversion of the estimate of 24% to absolute numbers gives another perspective on the magnitude of the problem. The best estimate would be that, of the 11,800 full-time women students enrolled at University Park at the time of the study, about 2800 had experienced sexual harassment in some form (See Appendix A).

Two of the categories of sexual harassment clearly involve some attempt at sexual contact with a student: nine percent (1 out of 11) of the respondents had experienced either physical harassment or requests or demands for sex. Thus, approximately 1070 of the women on campus had had to deal with at least one of these clearly sexual types of harassment. Unwelcome requests for dates affected 8% of the women, and a total of 13% (1 out of 7) of the women interviewed had experienced at least one of these first three categories of harassment. Therefore, our best estimate would be that about 1500 of the women students on campus at the time of the survey had had some sort of pass made at them by someone in a position of power.

The final 12% of the totals, representing about 1300 women, consists of students who had been the object only of suggestive remarks, jokes, stares or comments about their body. While in comparison with the other types of harassment such experiences may seem mild, they

clearly involve inappropriate behavior and, as our examples illustrate, can have a significant effect on students' educational experience at Penn State.

The Characteristics of Sexual Harassment Incidents

This section of the report presents details regarding the power relation between harassers and victims, characteristics of victims, consequences for the victim, and the reporting of incidents.

The Power Relationship.

The existence of a power relationship between the harasser and the student is a critical defining feature of harassment. Sixty-eight percent of the harassment incidents involved faculty members, 20% involved graduate students who were in a position of power over the student, with the other 12% distributed among counselors, physicians, lab technicians, and other assorted positions.

In the incidents involving undergraduates about 7 out of 10 of the harassers were the victim's teacher at the time of the harassment incident, thus in a position to have an immediate effect on the educational experience of the student and on her grades. In 8% of the incidents the harasser was her current advisor, and in 8% of the cases he was her job supervisor on campus. In a few cases the harasser held more than one of these power positions and altogether, 83% of the undergraduate incidents involved at least one of these positions of clear and immediate power. (For other relationships, see Appendix B, Table 1).

For graduate students the power relationship is equally clear, but organized somewhat differently. The harasser was a current teacher in

32% of the incidents, but 53% of the cases involved a faculty member in her department. Members of a graduate student's department may have important effects on decisions regarding her program, funding, and general reputation within her field. Thirteen percent of the graduate student incidents involved a current advisor and 9% of the incidents involved a member of the graduate student's committee. Eight percent of the harassers were the student's job supervisor on campus and 18% of the incidents involved either a department head or a director of the student's graduate program. Altogether, 87% of the graduate student incidents involved someone in at least one of these positions of power.

The power relationship is further accentuated by the settings in which the harassment incidents occured. Forty-two percent of the incidents took place in the harasser's office, and another 40% in a classroom or laboratory. It is therefore not surprising that many of the students who had been harassed were aware of the power dimension. In 26% of the incidents the women felt that they might be punished if they did not go along with the harasser and in 21% they felt that they might be rewarded. Altogether, 35% thought they might be rewarded or punished or both, and for incidents involving physical harassment, requests for sex or requests for dates the figure is 40%.

Characteristics of Victims. Graduate students were more likely to have been harassed than were undergraduates. Overall, 28% of the graduate students interviewed had been harassed, as compared with 19% of the undergraduates. There are two possible explanations for this differential. Graduate students have considerably more in common with their instructors than do undergraduates, including age and professional

interests; and they are probably more likely to find themselves in relatively private settings together.

Harassment victims were found in 65 departments and in every college of the University. Although a few colleges and majors were overrepresented with regard to harassment, the most faithful representation of the situation is that the harassment of students occurs throughout the University.

Finally, while it may seem unnecessary to point this out, sexual harassment is most often directed to women. Although the 1982 sample included only women, a preliminary study of a random sample of 100 men, done in the spring of 1981 uncovered only one incident of sexual harassment.

Consequences for the Victim. Harassment victims were presented with a list of possible reactions and asked to indicate their feelings at the time of the incident. Most of the women were surprised (68%) and/or shocked (41%), and felt at least uncomfortable (90%) or embarassed (71%). Stronger reactions included anger (63%) and disgust (54%). Twenty-five percent felt helpless, 32% felt trapped and 22% were frightened. (For other reactions, see Appendix B, Table 3).

With regard to the long-term effects of the incidents, 30% of the victims said the harassment had changed their plans or behavior; the changes included avoiding the professor, changing a major, not taking a course, or not putting the professor on one's committee. Fifty percent reported a change in their relationship with the harasser, and 33% reported a change in their general attitude toward faculty members. The changes generally centered around a lack of trust. The educational

experience for these women, then, was quite different than it would have been had they not been harassed.

Reporting of Incidents. Only 4% of the incidents were reported to a Department Head or to another administrator. Twenty percent of the victims at least talked to a faculty member about the incident and 2% talked to the Resident Assistant in their dormitory. All-in-all, 21% of the incidents were known to someone who might have taken some action, but as far as the victims knew, no action was taken in any of the incidents.

It is not altogether surprising that 4 out of 5 of the incidents were never reported to anyone in authority. Only 22% of the victims said they had ever seen the section on sexual harassment in the Student Handbook. As a result most victims probably do not know exactly what constitutes sexual harassment or what to do about it if they think it has happened to them.

The Reduction of Sexual Harassment

The University can reduce the incidence and the impact of sexual harassment in two ways: First, stop the harassment before it occurs; second, react appropriately if it does happen.

Prevention.

The University must take a strong, public and continuing stand against the sexual harassment of students. The first step in this direction has already been taken. Since 1981, the University has had an explicit policy against the sexual harassment of students, published in both the Student Handbook and the Faculty Handbook. However, with regard to the prevention of sexual harassment there are two major problems with the policy: (1) sexual harassment is too narrowly defined and (2) the policy lacks sufficient visibility.

Definition. The University definition of sexual harassment with regard to students reads as follows:

> Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment where submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a basis for decisions affecting such student. (Faculty Handbook, 1981, p. 60; Student Handbook, 1983, p. 6,)

A strict reading of this policy would allow professors to threaten their students as long as they did not carry out their threats. Even a more liberal reading would give both faculty and students the impression that whatever a professor does is not harassment unless he openly intends to abuse his power by basing decisions regarding the student on her sexual conduct rather than on the appropriate grounds. Not only is intent difficult to prove, but as we have argued above, the inherent ambiguity

of intent in such situations forces upon the victim a decision-making dilemma which the University must not allow.

We would recommend that the University define the sexual harassment of students in the same way that sexual harassment of employees is defined. The following phrase is taken from the University's definition of sexual harassment of employees: "... or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment." (Faculty Handbook, 1981, p. 60) Subsituting the term "educational" for the term "work" and "working" in that phrase would provide students with the same protection which the University accords its employees.

Publicity. A sexual harassment policy can prevent harassment only if potential harassers are aware of the University's commitment to its position. Our data show that only 17% of Penn State women (22% of the harassment victims) had read the statement in the Student Handbook; the figure for faculty would probably be even lower.

There are a number of simple and inexpensive means by which the University could make faculty and students aware of its harassment policy. First, each year the President could write a letter to University administrators and teaching personnel (including graduate assistants), stating the University policy and emphasizing the administration's commitment to the prevention of sexual harassment.

Second, the President's message could be communicated through a large display ad published in the Collegian every semester, to insure that it repeatedly reaches all sectors of the University community.

Third, the issue of sexual harassment could receive regular treatment in orientation programs for students and faculty. The President's letter could be included in faculty and student orientation materials.

The steps suggested above should considerably decrease the incidence of sexual harassment at Penn State. Staff who are unaware of the problems produced by the confluence of their authority and their sexual interest will be enlightened. Those who have knowingly abused their power will be forewarned of the possible consequences.

Official Reaction to Harassment Incidents

There are two important aspects of the University's official reaction to incidents of sexual harassment. The first is the University's statement of its general procedures and the principles which will govern its reaction; the second is its response to specific reported cases of harassment.

Statement of Procedures. The University can take no action to stop a harasser unless his behavior is reported. The preventive steps recommended above would not only reach faculty, but would also help to make students aware of University policy and appropriate reporting procedures. It is further necessary, however, that the statements of procedures themselves be designed to encourage women to report harassment.

The current statement in the Student Handbook (p. 6) reads as follows:

> Alleged incidents of sexual harassment in which a student feels that he or she is a victim may be discussed informally and confidentially with a staff member (either a woman or a man), in accordance with the wishes of the student. At University Park, the staff member is appointed by the vice president for student affairs. Students at other locations should consult their dean or director of student affairs to obtain the name of the staff member. If appropriate, the staff member will attempt to resolve the problem. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student, Procedures for Resolving Student Allegations of Discrimination, as outlined, may be invoked by the student.

This statement of procedure has three drawbacks. First, it may seem to students to require contact with a threatingly high level administrator (the vice president for student affairs at University Park, a dean or director of student affairs at the branch campuses). Second, the Vice President, Dean, or Director in question is likely to be a man, and one for whom the problem of sexual harassment is a minor part of his administrative duties. Third, the procedure has an ad hoc appearance; it seems that the student will first have to tell her story to one person, then be passed on to someone else who may have no special training and perhaps no special interest in problems of sexual harassment.

To encourage reporting, the policy statement must communicate the University's commitment to the confidential, sympathetic, and effective handling of cases of sexual harassment. The following amended statement makes such commitment clearer and should reduce student fears regarding who they will have to report to and how the case will be handled:

At each campus there is a female staff member who is assigned to handle cases of sexual harassment. At University Park her name may be obtained from the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs; at the branch campuses it may be obtained from the office of the Dean or Director of Student Affairs.

If a student feels that she/he has been a victim of sexual harassment, the incident should be discussed with the designated staff member. All such discussions are completely confidential and no action will be taken unless the student so wishes. If appropriate, the staff member will attempt to resolve the problem through informal procedures. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student, Procedures for Resolving Student Allegations of Discrimination, as outlined, may be invoked by the student.

Handling of Specific Cases. Each harassment incident, victim, and perpetrator presents unique characteristics, and the possibilities for University action must be flexible enough to allow for reactions appropriate to each individual case. The procedures available to the designated staff member must range from confidential consultation and advice to the victim, through formal disciplinary action against the harasser.

Confidential consultation. Most victims of sexual harassment are interested only in being left alone, not in retribution. Their primary need is confidential contact with a person who can provide them with informed advice regarding alternative tactics which they can use themselves to stop the harassment.

One tactic which has proven effective in an MIT program is the delivery of a letter to the harasser from the victim. The letter should (1) clearly state the behaviors involved, including (where possible) dates, locations, etc., (2) present the victim's reactions to those behaviors, and (3) indicate the action which the victim wishes the harasser to take now, e.g., change her grade, stop calling her

apartment, do not speak to her, etc. A copy of the letter should be kept by the victim, and the original delivered to the harasser in the presence of a witness. Experience at MIT suggests that this procedure stops the harassment against the complaining student and, further, that notified harassers also stop bothering other students.

Official Contact with the Harasser. In some cases it may be necessary that the administrative officer responsible for harassment cases contact the harasser directly to inform him of the student complaint(s). In such cases, the identity of the particular complainants(s) may still be kept confidential.

If this approach is ineffective, the next step might be an informal mediational process such as that used at Yale College (Brandenburg, 1982).

Finally, if all other approaches fail, or if disciplinary action is deemed necessary, and one or more of the victims is willing to proceed further, formal disciplinary action may be taken.

Summary of Recommendations

In light of the documented extent of sexual harassment of students at Penn State, the following ten steps are recommended.

1. Appoint a female staff member at each campus to handle cases of sexual harassment with the power to hold in complete confidence any conversation regarding specific incidents of sexual harassment.

2. Develop a packet of training materials for the staff members appointed to deal with sexual harassment.

3. Revise the definition of sexual harassment of students to make it comparable to that regarding the harassment of employees, i.e., to include any sexual misbehavior which creates a hostile educational environment (see pp. 16-17).

4. Revise the policy statement to make it clear that there is a woman appointed at each campus to regularly handle cases of sexual harassment (see pp. 18-20).

5. Revise the policy statement to make it clear that all discussions of specific incidents of sexual harassment are confidential and that no action will be taken without the student's consent (see pp. 18-20).

6. Distribute an annual letter from the President to teaching and administrative personnel emphasizing the University's commitment to the elimination of sexual harassment (see pp. 17-18).

7. Present the statement of the University's sexual harassment policy every semester as a full-page display ad in the Collegian (see pp. 17-18).

8. Include the issue of sexual harassment as a regular part of orientation programs and materials for students and faculty (see pp. 17-18).

9. Purchase the training program, "Tell Someone", designed at the University of Michigan to discourage sexual harassment.

10. Consider the appropriateness for Penn State of the mediation procedure used at Yale. See Brandenburg, 1982. Appendix

All of these recommendations could be implemented immediately, easily, and at minimal cost to the University.

Appendix A

Number of Women at University park Experiencing Sexual Harassment

	Percent	Number*
1. Physical harassment	8%	944
2. Requests or demands for sex	2%	236
3. Unwelcome requests for dates	8%	944
4. Suggestive behavior	20%	2360
Sub-total** of physical harassment and requests or demands for sex	8%	944
Sub-total of physical harassment, requests or demands for sex, and unwelcome requests for dates	13%	1534
Total of all four types of harassment	24%	2832

*Estimate based on the sample percents and enrollments, Spring, 1982.

**The sub-totals and totals do not correspond to the sum of the categories involved because some women experienced more than one kind of harassment.

Appendix B

Tables of Characteristics of Sexual Harassment Incidents

Table B-1

Power Relationship Between Victim and Harasser
at the Time of the Incident

(n=125)

Power Relationship	Percent of Undergraduate Incidents	Percent of Graduate Incidents
Current teacher	70%	32%
Past teacher	8%	17%
Current advisor	8%	13%
Past advisor	6%	5%
Faculty member, victim's dept.	17%	53%
Member of victim's committee	-	9%
Job supervisor	8%	8%
Administrator	0%	18%

*Percents do not add to 100 because a harasser could hold multiple positions.

Table B-2

Settings in Which Incidents Occurred

(n=126)

Setting	Percent of Incidents*
Class or Lab	40%
Harasser's Office	42%
Victim's Office	10%
Elsewhere on campus	26%
Harasser's Home	7%
Victim's Home	2%
Party	10%
Bar	12%
Other	18%

*Percents do not add to 100 because some incidents involve multiple locations.

Table B-3

Victim's Reactions at the Time of the Incident

(n=126)

Reaction	Percent of Incidents*
Shocked	41%
Surprised	68%
Embarassed	71%
Uncomfortable	90%
Confused	32%
Frightened	22%
Helpless	25%
Trapped	32%
Angry	63%
Insulted	50%
Disgusted	54%
Dirty	3%
Used	18%
Guilty	7%
Ashamed	6%
Flattered	24%
Didn't bother her	10%

*Percents do not add to 100 because victims could indicate multiple reactions.

Table B-4

Reporting of Incidents

(n=125)

Recipient of Report	Percent of Incidents*
Administrator	3%
Campus Police	0%
Harasser's Department Head	3%
Victim's Resident Assistant	2%
Victim's Advisor	9%
Faculty Member Other Than Advisor	12%
Female Friend	70%
Male Friend	38%
Parents	14%
Other	14%

*Percents do not add to 100 because victims indicated all individuals to whom the incident was reported.

Appendix C

References

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